

Us

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World rights

'Us' is the love story of Sara and Diana, and it is also the story of Diana's gender transition.

For eight years together as a heterosexual couple, Diana realized that she is a transgender woman, and she confesses it to Sara. At the beginning, both of them are afraid that this sudden twist in their relationship may destroy it, but they realize that they are still in love and that nothing has changed between them. Now, they have to come out and to deal with their family and social circle's judgement.

ÉRASE UNA VEZ

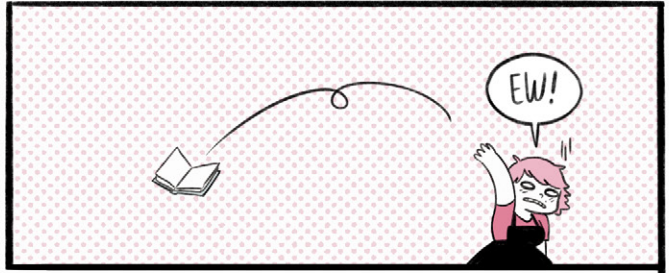
IN A
VERY BINARY
LAND...

THERE WAS A
LITTLE BOY WHO DID
LITTLE GIRL THINGS
LIKE WEARING DRESSES
AND PLAYING WITH
DOLLS.

EVER SINCE
HE WAS LITTLE,
HE KNEW THAT IN
REALITY HE WAS
NOT A BOY,
BECAUSE OF
COURSE...

...AS YOU ALL
KNOW, ONLY LITTLE
GIRLS CAN DO LITTLE
GIRL THINGS AND ONLY
LITTLE BOYS CAN DO
LITTLE BOY THINGS...
STEREOTYPES DON'T
LIE!

EL GRIMORIO
DE LAS
IDEAS
PRECONCEBIDAS*



HEY!
WE'RE SARA AND
DIANA AND WE'VE
COME TO TELL YOU
ABOUT OUR LIFE!

FIRST OF ALL,
WE SHOULD TELL
YOU THAT DIANA IS
A TRANS WOMAN.

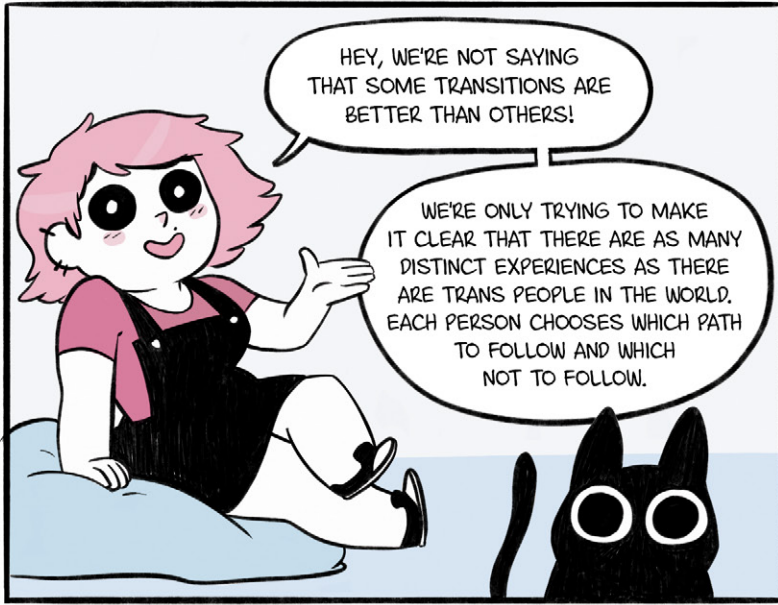
THAT'S RIGHT,
THAT'S RIGHT. WE ALSO
WANT TO EXPLAIN WHY
WE'VE STARTED THIS
WAY.

A LOT OF TRANS STORIES
START THIS WAY, BUT IT IS NOT
A REQUIREMENT. THERE ARE
PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT FOR A
PERSON TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO
DECLARE THEMSELVES TRANS,
THEY HAVE TO HAVE SIGNALLED
THEIR CONDITION FROM THE
BEGINNING. THIS IS AN
ERROR!

THIS IS
A GENDER
STEREOTYPE.

"IF YOU'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
A GIRL, WHY
DIDN'T YOU PLAY
WITH DOLLS
AND WEAR
DRESSES?"





HEY, WE'RE NOT SAYING THAT SOME TRANSITIONS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS!

WE'RE ONLY TRYING TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THERE ARE AS MANY DISTINCT EXPERIENCES AS THERE ARE TRANS PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. EACH PERSON CHOOSES WHICH PATH TO FOLLOW AND WHICH NOT TO FOLLOW.



AND THEY'RE ALL VALID.



SO, WHAT WE'RE GOING TO SHARE WITH YOU HERE IS AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY!

OUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, UNIQUE AND INIMITABLE!

WE'RE GOING TO OPEN OUR HEARTS DOWN TO THE VENTRICLES!

HALP.

I'M SCARED.

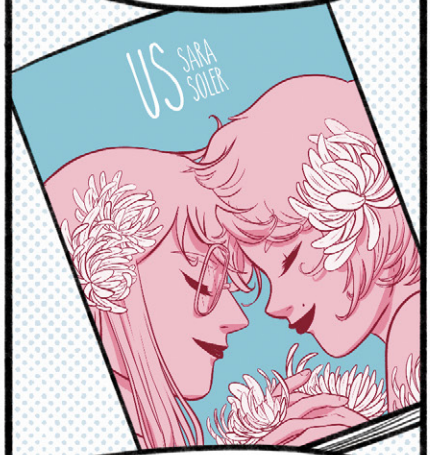
AND WHY WOULD WE PROPOSE DOING SOMETHING SO GORY? YOU ASK YOURSELVES...

THIS COMIC HAS ITS ORIGINS IN A 24-PAGE FANZINE I DREW IN 2019, WITH THE EXCUSE OF TAKING IT TO THE KBOOM COMIC FESTIVAL.

BUT AT ONLY 24 PAGES, I FELT LIKE IT WAS A LITTLE SHORT.



THIS PROJECT BEGAN AFTER WE REALIZED THE NEED TO MAKE THE TRANS REALITY MORE VISIBLE.



IT'S BEEN 2 YEARS SINCE DIANA BEGAN HER TRANSITION AND WE HAD ALREADY DEALT WITH TRANSPHOBIC AND MISOGYNISTIC ATTITUDES.



IN GENERAL, PEOPLE ARE VERY POORLY INFORMED, AND FREQUENTLY IGNORANCE AND DISINFORMATION MAKE THEM HAVE VERY DAMAGING ATTITUDES TOWARDS THAT WHICH IS DIFFERENT FROM THEM.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO TELL YOU HERE IS A TRUE STORY, WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS AND EXAGGERATIONS ALONG THE WAY FOR THE SAKE OF COMEDY.

SO WE'RE GOING TO USE THIS HENOJI DUMMY TO SET THE SCENE FOR VARIOUS SITUATIONS WE'VE GONE THROUGH, KEEPING THE INVOLVED PARTIES ON THE SIDELINES.

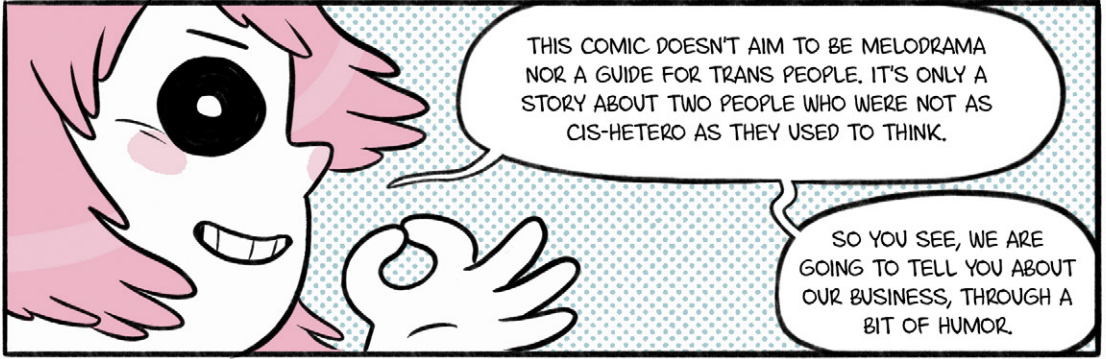


HENOHO-MOHEJI, THE BRAINLESS SCARECROW.

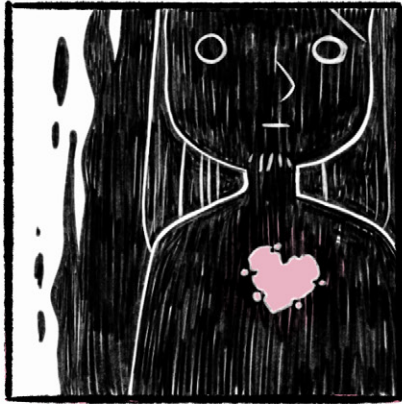
NO BRAIN NO GAIN

CHIVO EXPIATORIO*

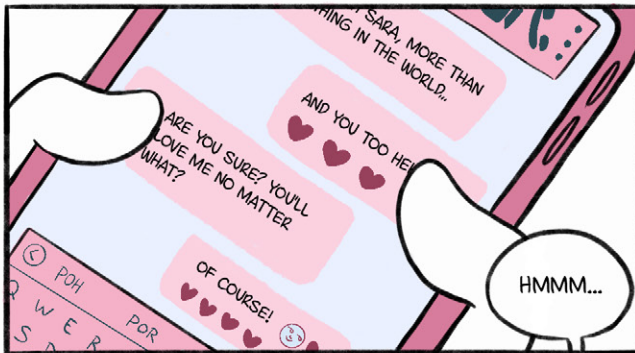
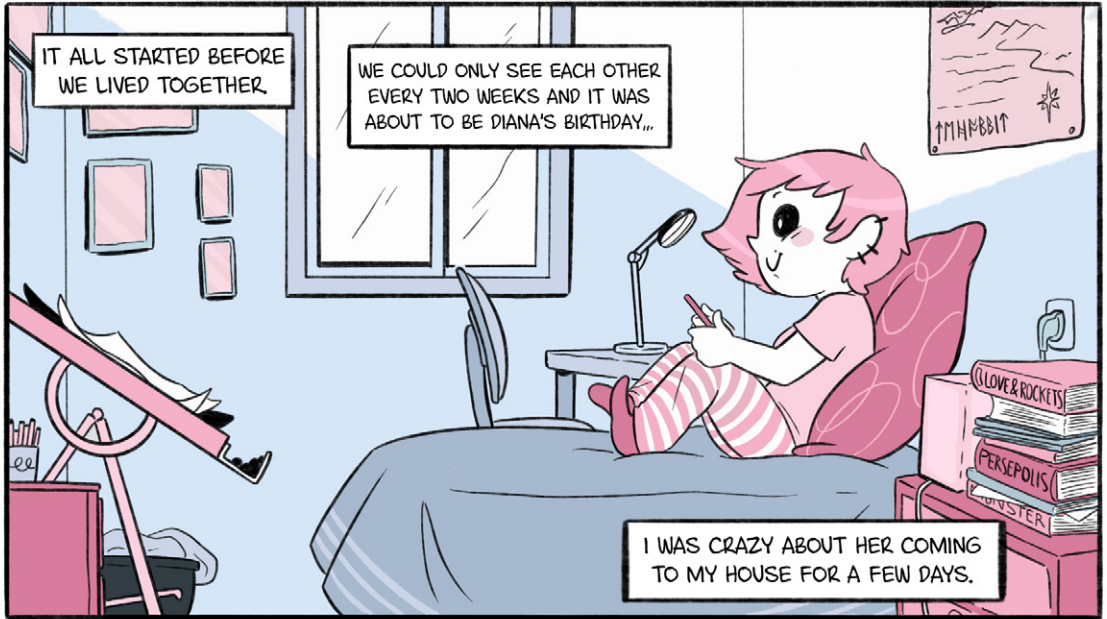
* SCAPEGOAT

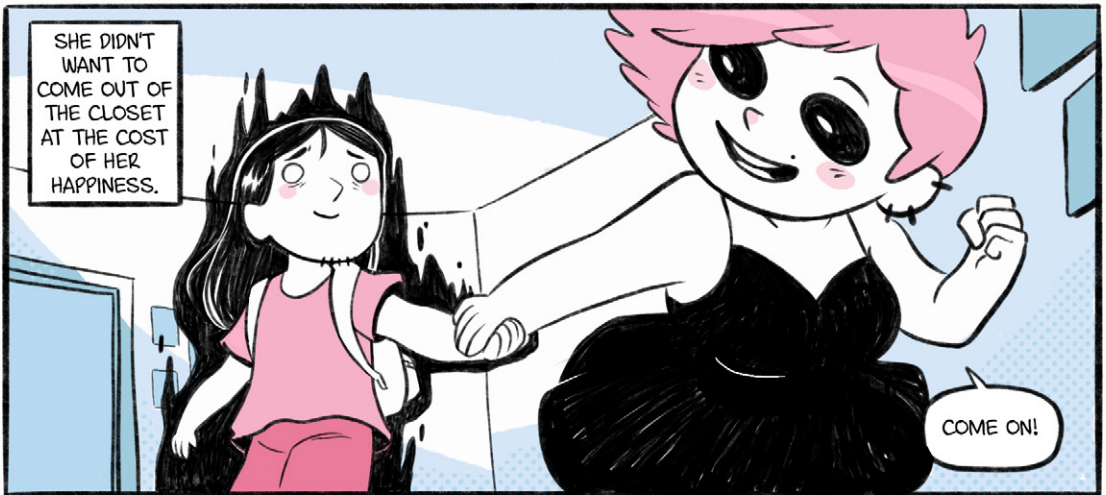
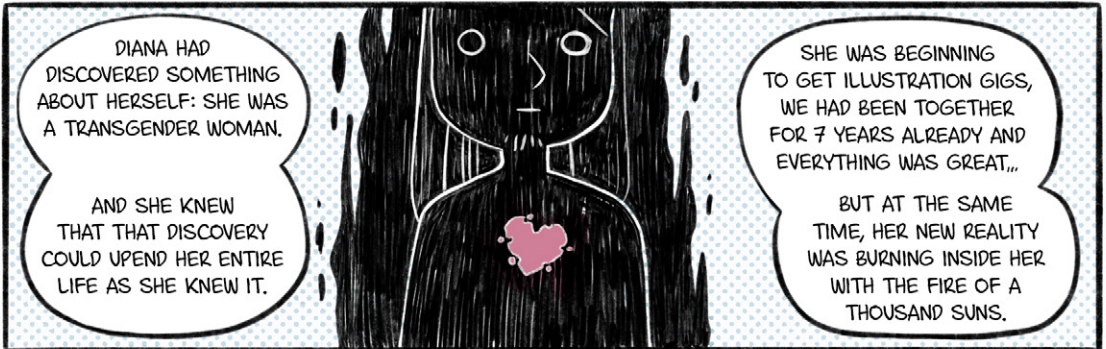
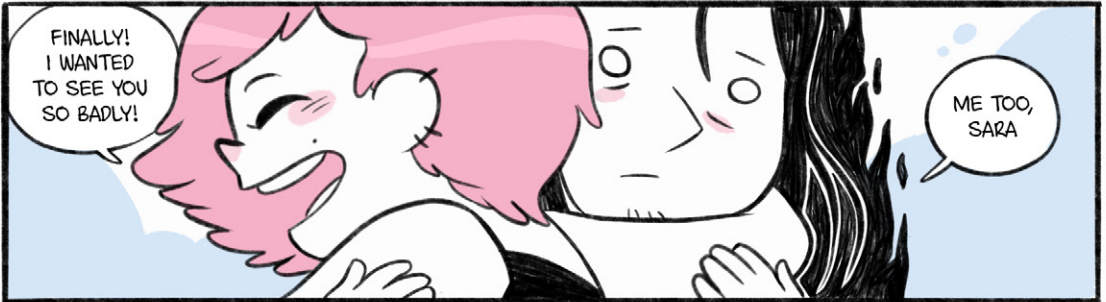


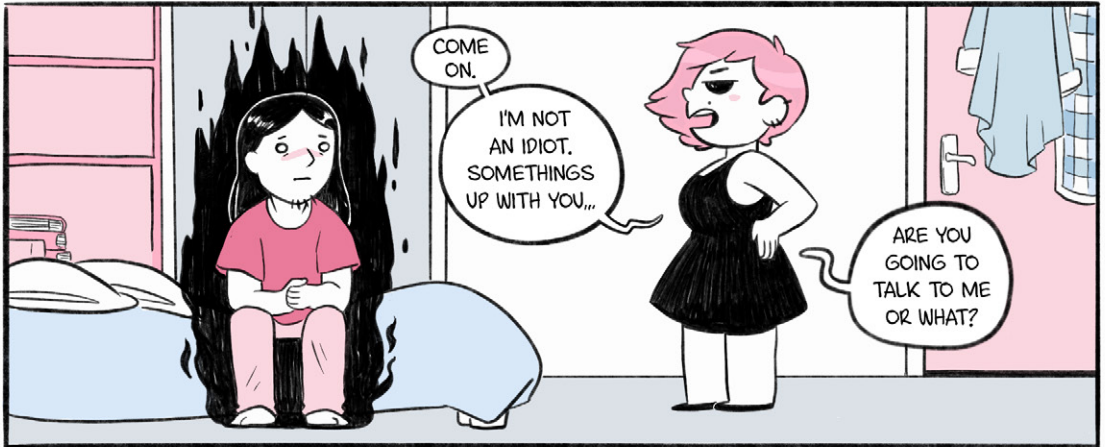
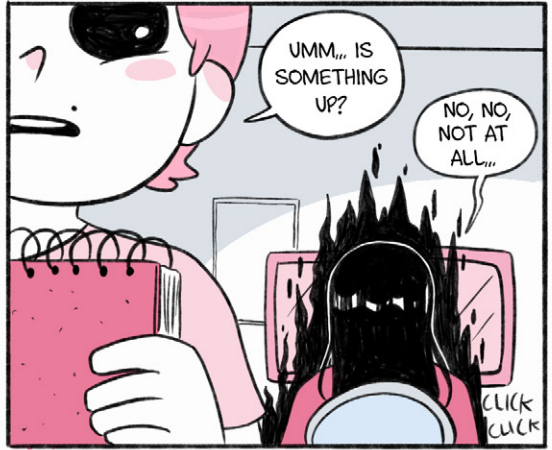
1.



COMING OUT

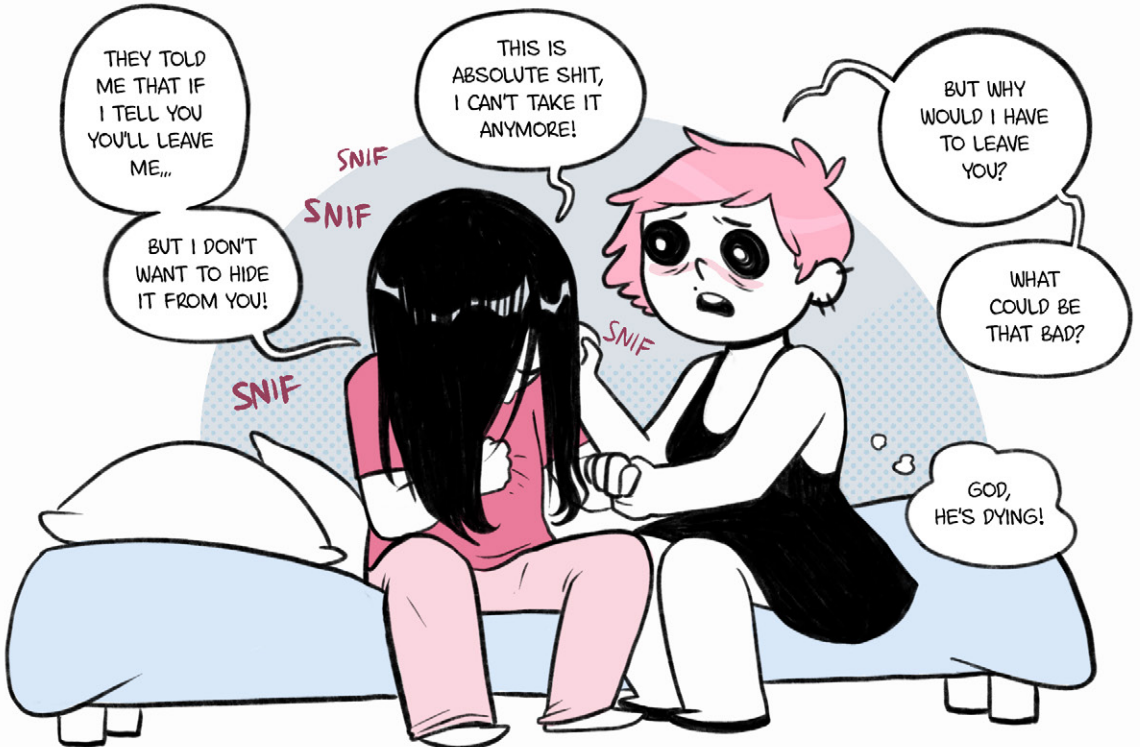


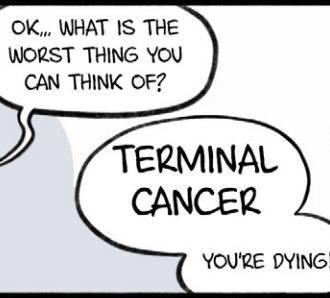




I, WHO AM NOT A FATALIST OR ANYTHING, THOUGHT:

CANCER TERMINAL



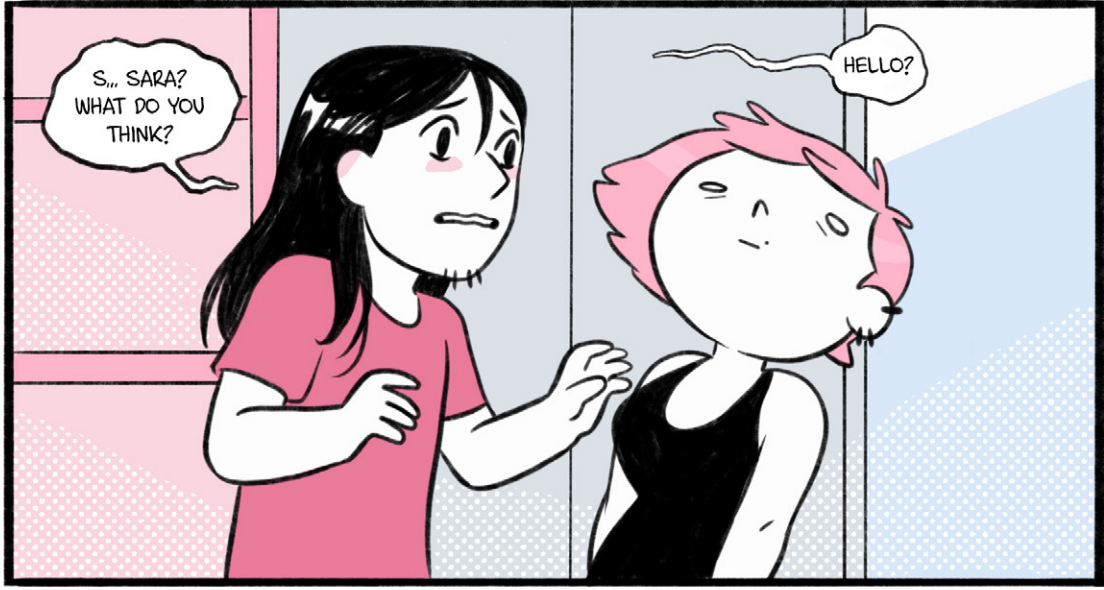




LOOK... I... I... I'VE REALIZED THAT IN REALITY I AM NOT A MAN... I AM A WOMAN... AND, I DON'T KNOW, A WHILE BACK I REALIZED IT AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO BECAUSE ALL OF THIS IS A BIG MESS AND MY BRAIN IS GOING ABOUT A MILE A MINUTE SINCE I REALIZED IT BECAUSE I LIKE MY LIFE EXACTLY THE WAY IT IS...



I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU OR MY FRIENDS OR MY FAMILY AND I KNOW WHAT COULD HAPPEN... BUT NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT I TRULY AM I CAN'T STAY LIKE I AM NOW... AND... AND... I STILL LIKE WOMEN SARA, I LOVE YOU MORE THAN EVER... BUT MAYBE YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE... BECAUSE OF WHAT I AM...

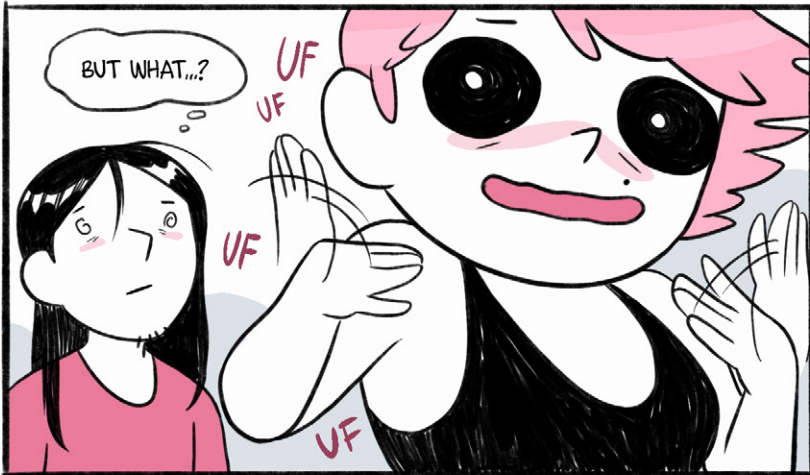


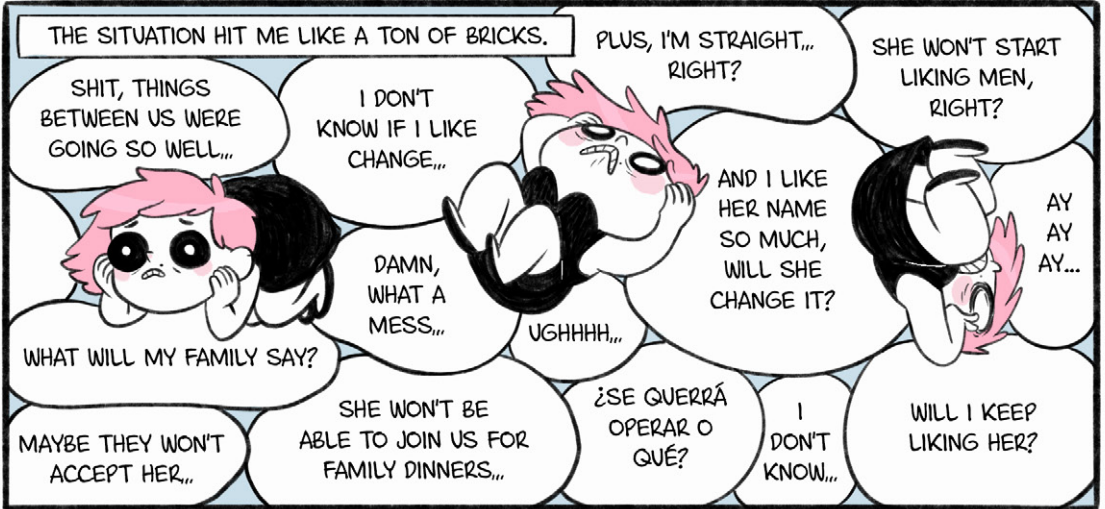
S... SARA? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

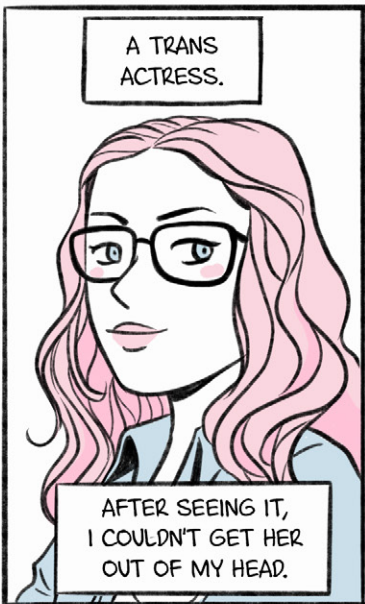
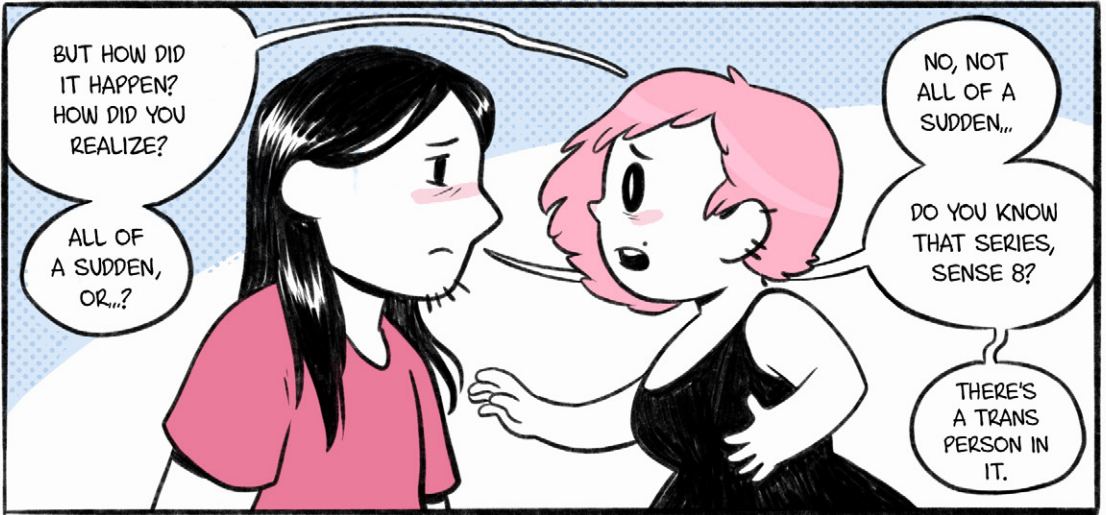
HELLO?

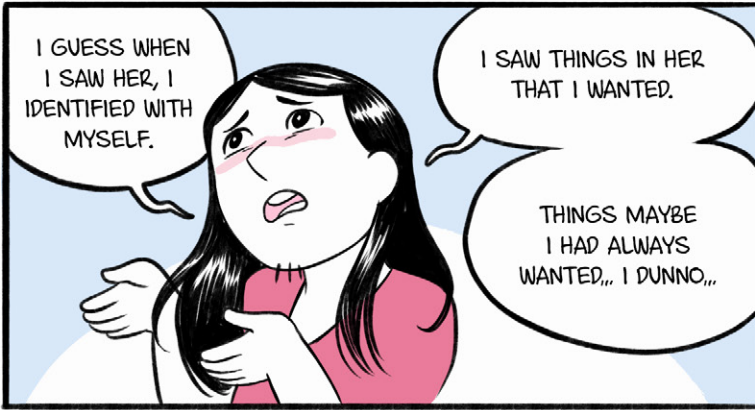


FIUUUUUUUUUU

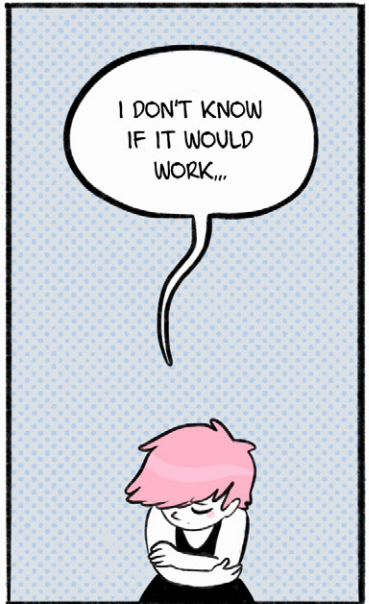
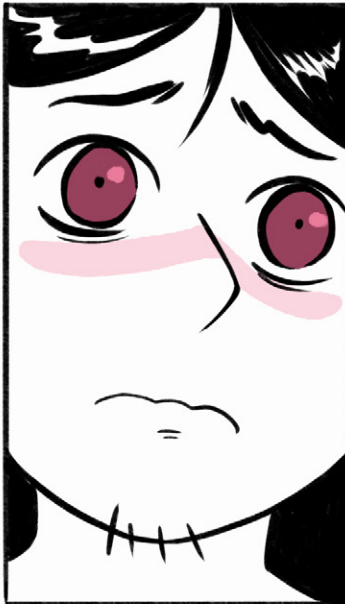


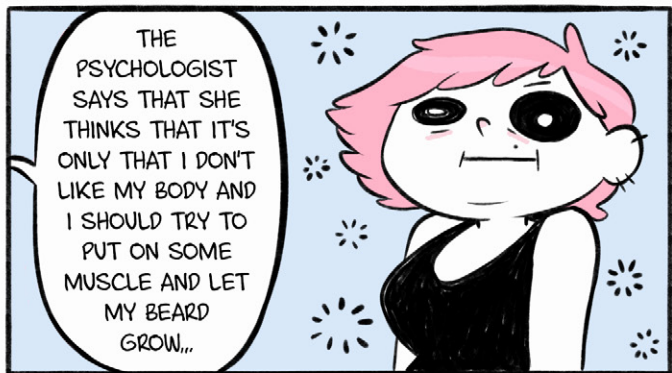
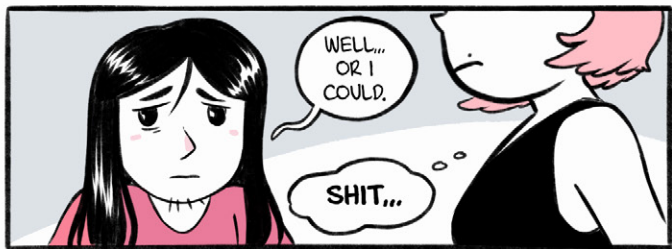






DIANA HADN'T REALIZED IT YET, BUT IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE THAT SHE SAW A TRANS PERSON REPRESENTED WITHOUT BEING A JOKE, SOMETHING OUTLANDISH OR BAD. SIMPLY BEING A NORMAL PERSON...







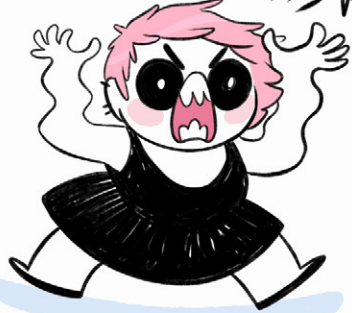
I KNOW YOU AND YOU'RE NOT AN IDIOT! IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR BODY LIKE THAT, WHY WOULD YOU TRY TO CHANGE IT IN A MORE COMPLICATED WAY?!



WHAT THE HELL DOES SHE MEAN, PUT ON SOME MUSCLE AND GROW A BEARD? HER SOLUTION IS TO TURN YOURSELF INTO A LUMBERJACK?

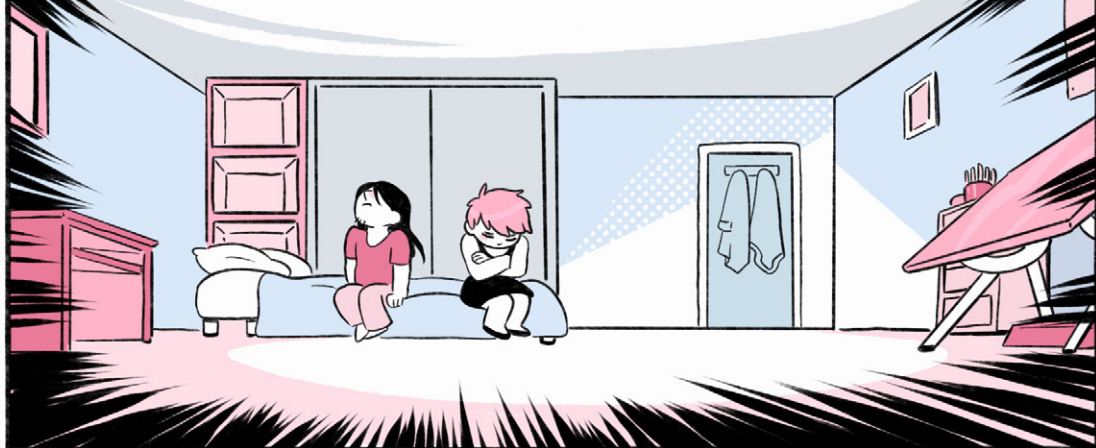


ARE WE CRAZY?!

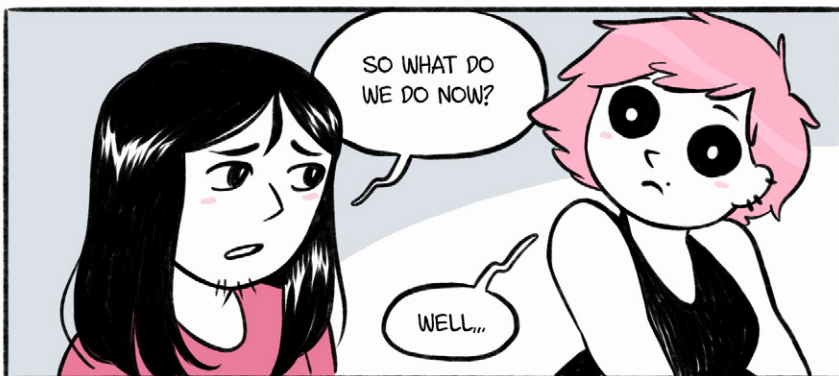


SPOILER: SHE DIDN'T. SHE WAS TRYING TO LOOK FOR EXCUSES TO REMOVE TRANSEXUALITY FROM THE EQUATION. SHE WASN'T INFORMED, NOR HAD SHE STUDIED QUESTIONS OF GENDER IDENTITY. IT WAS LIKE ASKING AN OPHTHALMOLOGIST TO PERFORM OPEN HEART SURGERY, BECAUSE IN THE END, THEY'RE BOTH DOCTORS.

NEITHER ONE OF US REALLY KNEW WHAT TO DO OR HOW TO REACT. AFTER THE INITIAL COCKTAIL OF EMOTIONS HAD PASSED, WE BECAME AWARE OF THE SITUATION AND REALITY WEIGHED HEAVILY ON US.



OUR RELATIONSHIP, SOMETHING WE HAD TAKEN FOR GRANTED, LIKE A FIXED POINT IN TIME AND SPACE, WAS TEETERING OFF COURSE BECAUSE OF SOMETHING WE COULDN'T CONTROL.



SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

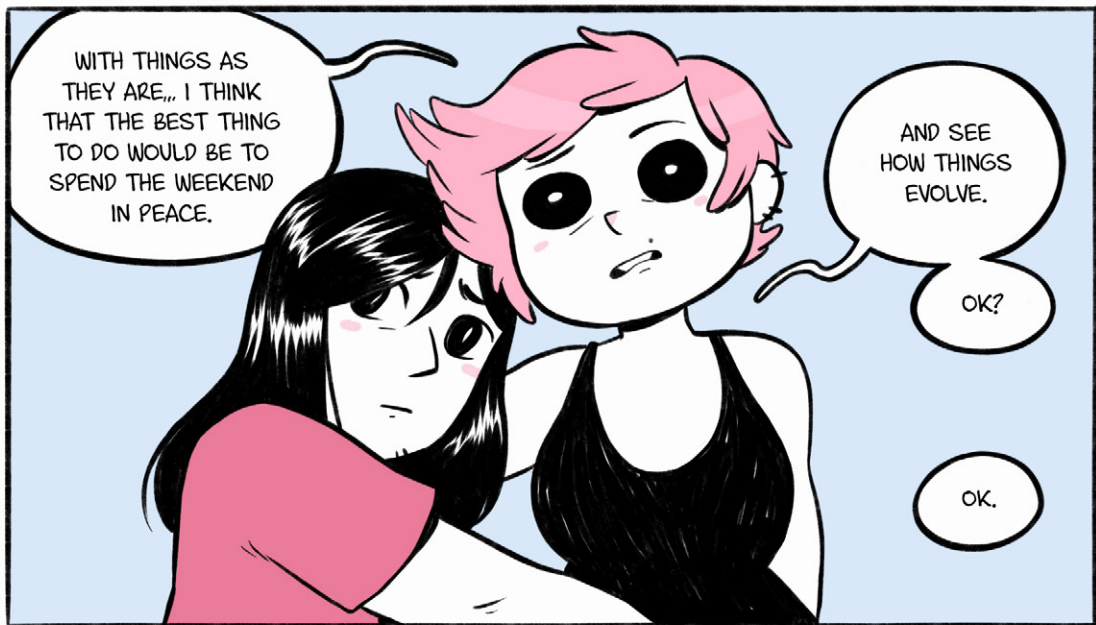
WELL...

WITH THINGS AS THEY ARE... I THINK THAT THE BEST THING TO DO WOULD BE TO SPEND THE WEEKEND IN PEACE.

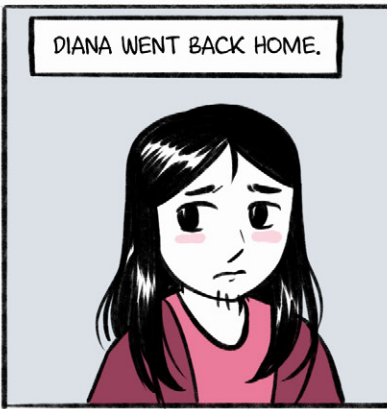
AND SEE HOW THINGS EVOLVE.

OK?

OK.



WE SPENT THE WHOLE WEEKEND WITH THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM.

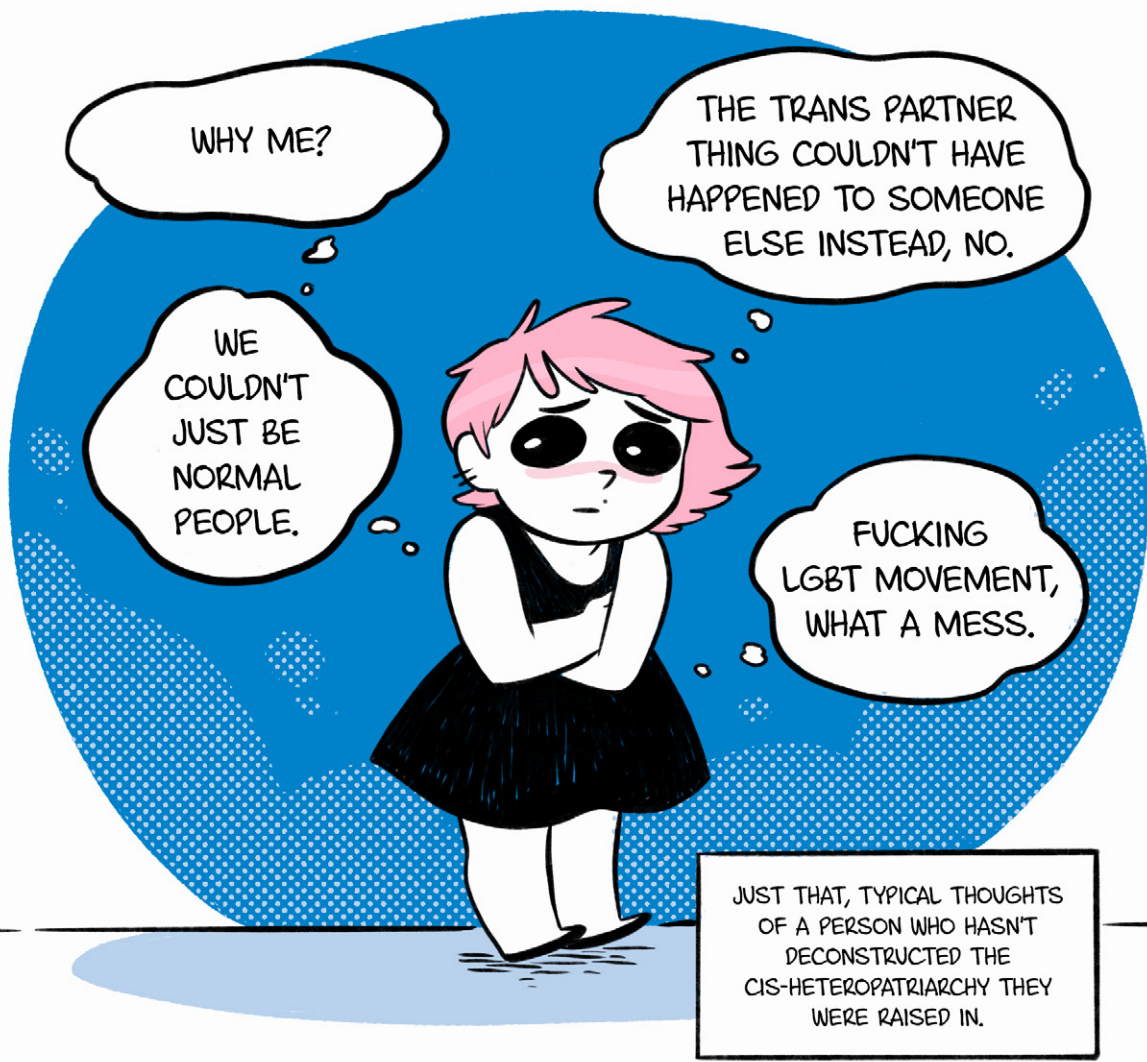


DIANA WENT BACK HOME.



AND I COULDN'T STOP THINKING THAT EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO SHIT.

DURING THE TWO WEEKS THAT PASSED BEFORE WE COULD SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN, LOTS OF THINGS WENT THROUGH MY HEAD. SOME OF THEM WERE VERY UGLY AND I'M NOT PROUD OF THEM.



WHY ME?

THE TRANS PARTNER THING COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED TO SOMEONE ELSE INSTEAD, NO.

WE COULDN'T JUST BE NORMAL PEOPLE.

FUCKING LGBT MOVEMENT, WHAT A MESS.

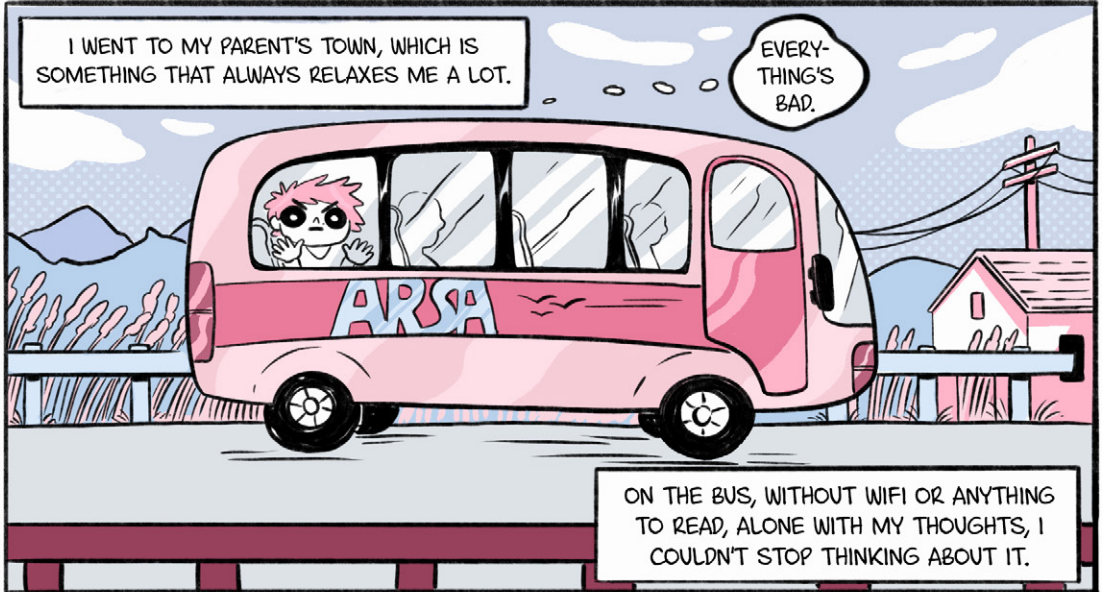
JUST THAT, TYPICAL THOUGHTS OF A PERSON WHO HASN'T DECONSTRUCTED THE CIS-HETEROPATRIARCHY THEY WERE RAISED IN.



I TRIED DISTRACTING MYSELF FROM THE SUBJECT HOWEVER I COULD, SO AS NOT TO OBSESS OVER IT.

EVERYTHING'S BAD.

I READ MONSTER BY URASAWA ALL IN ONE GO. THE ENTIRE SERIES LASTED ME THREE DAYS.



I WENT TO MY PARENT'S TOWN, WHICH IS SOMETHING THAT ALWAYS RELAXES ME A LOT.

EVERYTHING'S BAD.

ON THE BUS, WITHOUT WIFI OR ANYTHING TO READ, ALONE WITH MY THOUGHTS, I COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT.

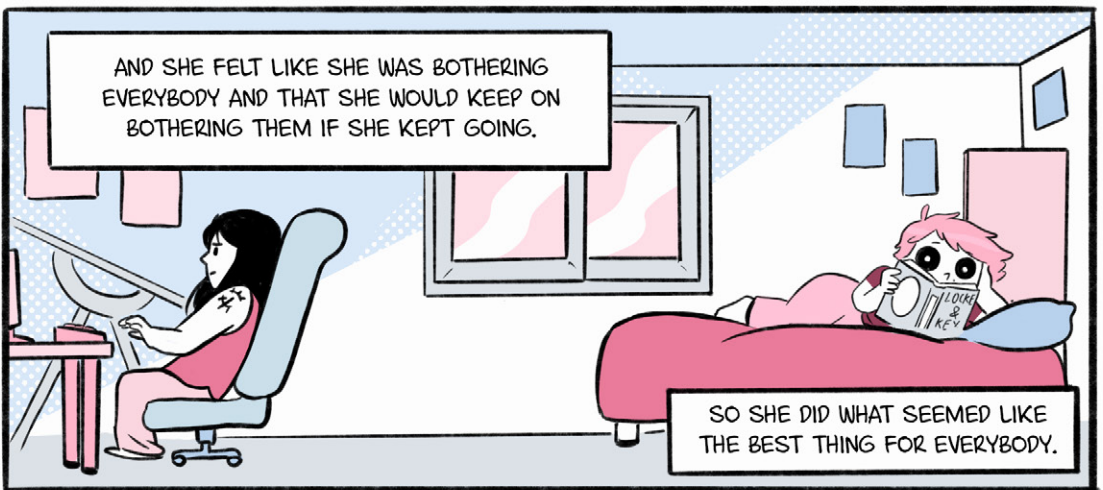
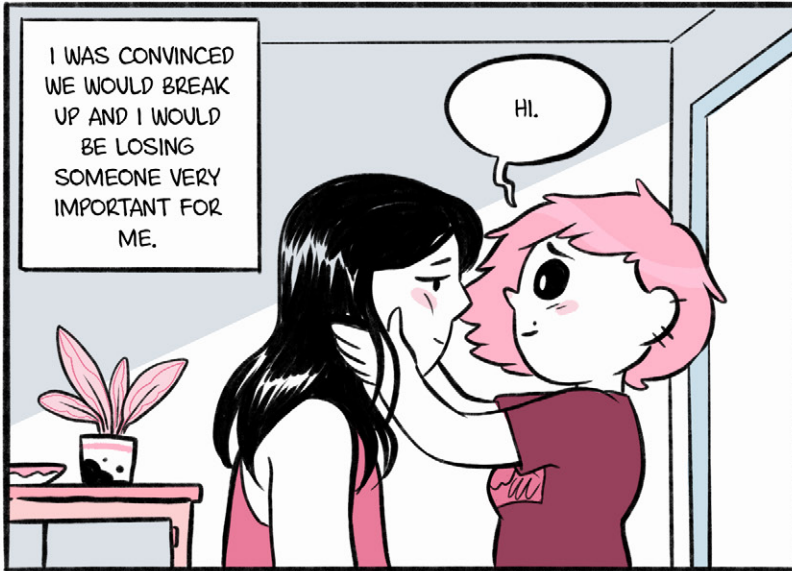
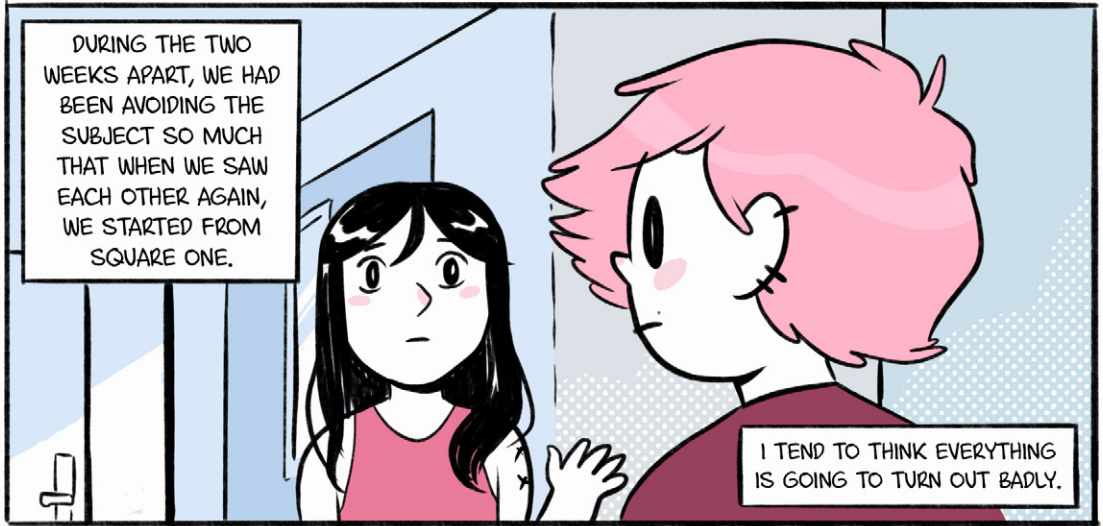


BETWEEN THAT AND THE CARSIKNESS, I ARRIVED IN AN EPICALLY HORRIBLE MOOD.

EVERYTHING'S BAD.

I CAN'T EVEN WITH THIS KID!

SORRY, MOM.





IT'S GOT TO BE WHAT THE PSYCHOLOGIST SAYS.

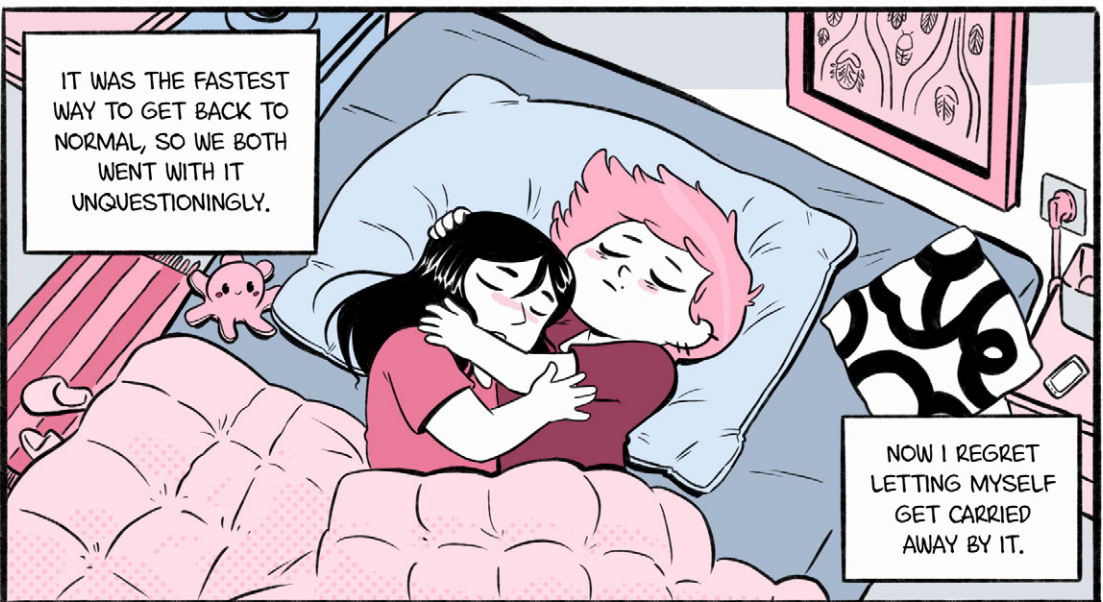
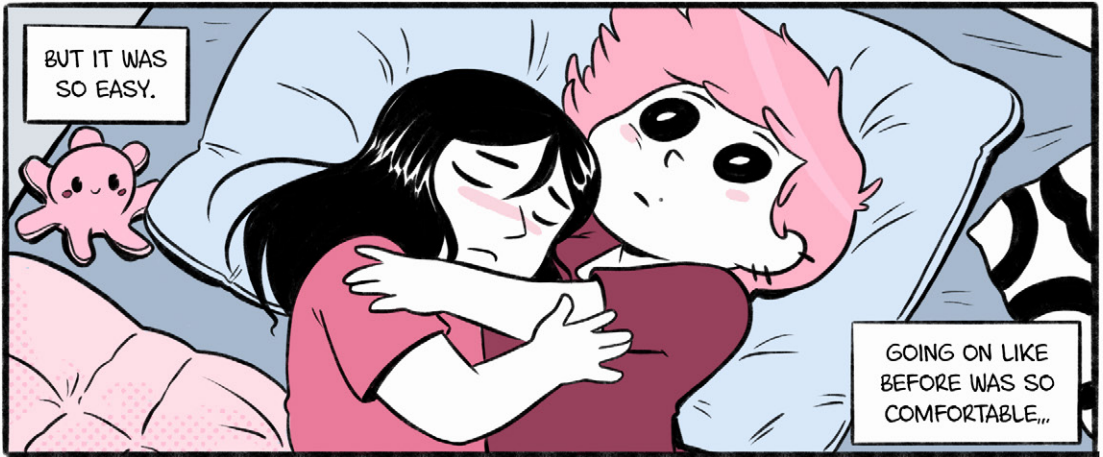
THAT I DON'T LIKE WHAT I SEE IN THE MIRROR, OR THAT I NEED TO MATURE...

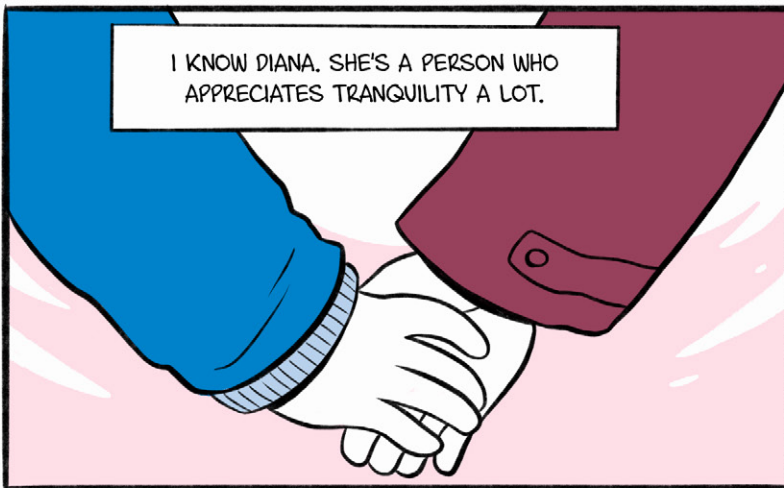
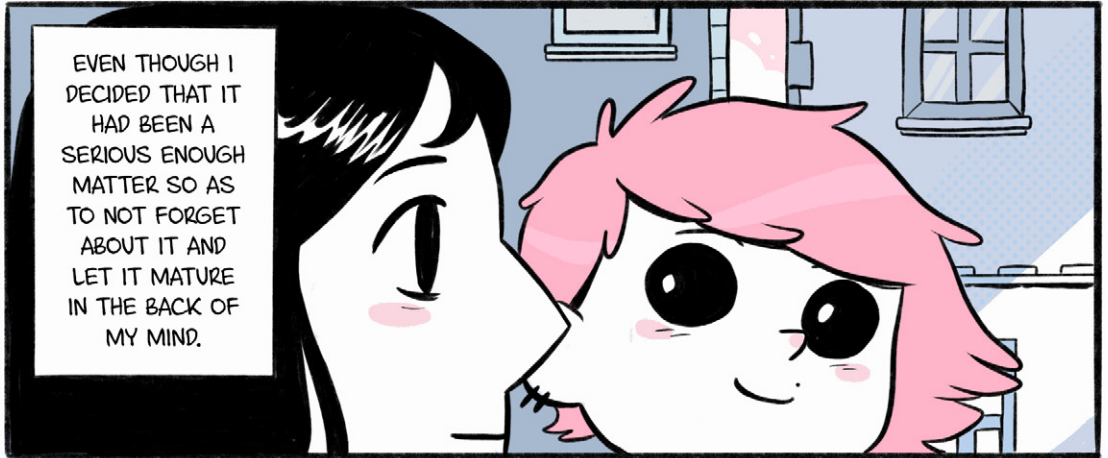
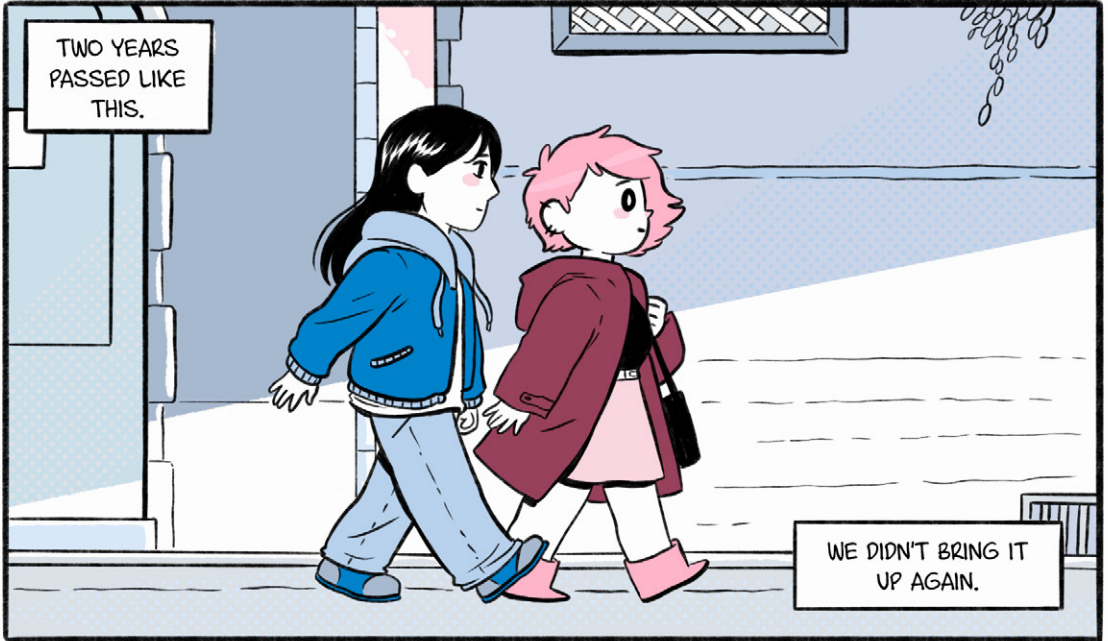
BUT, BUT... ARE YOU SURE? LOOK, I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET OVER THIS OVERNIGHT, DO YOU?



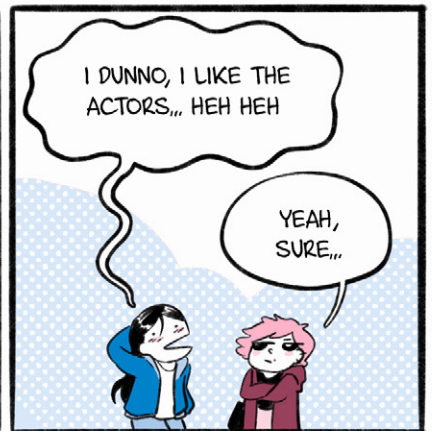
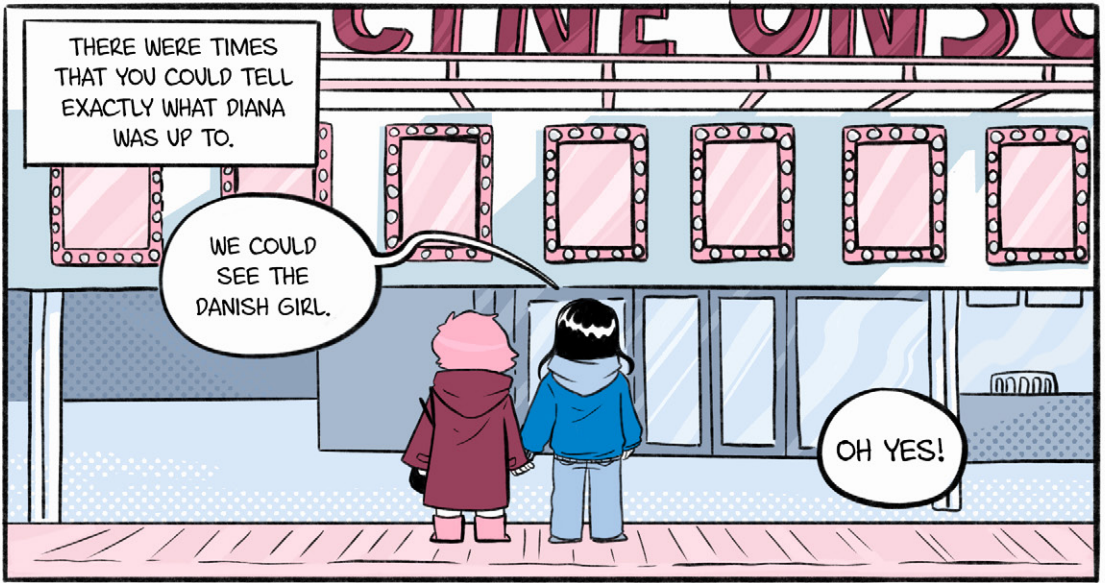


I DECIDED TO TAKE WHAT SHE SAID ON BLIND FAITH. EVEN THOUGH DEEP DOWN I KNEW IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR IT ALL TO HAVE GONE AWAY JUST LIKE THAT.





SHE WOULDN'T HAVE DISRUPTED EVERYTHING AROUND HER IF IT HADN'T BEEN REALLY IMPORTANT. SO WE PLAYED DUMB WHILE THE "PROBLEM" SIMMERED.



IF I COULD GO BACK, I WOULD'VE LIKED TO NOT TAKE THE EASY ROUTE, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT HAVING THOSE TWO YEARS OF LEEWAY BEFORE THE SITUATION EXPLODED AGAIN WAS A GIFT.

CINE ON SO

I THOUGHT ABOUT IT A LOT. I SORTED OUT MY CONCEPTS OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, EMOTIONS... THINGS I HAD NEVER REFLECTED ON VERY DEEPLY, OR AT LEAST NOT CONSCIOUSLY.

COULD I BE CAPABLE OF FALLING IN LOVE WITH A WOMAN? DID I LIKE WOMEN? I CONSIDERED MYSELF HETERO, BUT LOOKING OVER MY EXPERIENCE A BIT, I STARTED TO SEE CLUES...

THAT FRIEND YOU HAD IN SCHOOL WHO WAS SUUUUUCH A FRIEND ...

OR THAT OTHER ONE, WHEN YOU WERE SO BOTHERED THAT SHE GOT A BOYFRIEND AND YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHY...

THE TRUTH IS THAT I DID LIKE GUYS. WAS I ALSO ATTRACTED TO GIRLS THIS WHOLE TIME WITHOUT KNOWING IT?

IF YOU LOOK TO YOUR LEFT, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE AN EXAMPLE OF CONFUSED BISEXUALITY.

BUT THAT WASN'T ALL! ONE DAY I STUMBLED UPON AN ARTICLE THAT DISCUSSED A TERM THAT WAS NEW FOR ME...

DEMISEXUALITY:

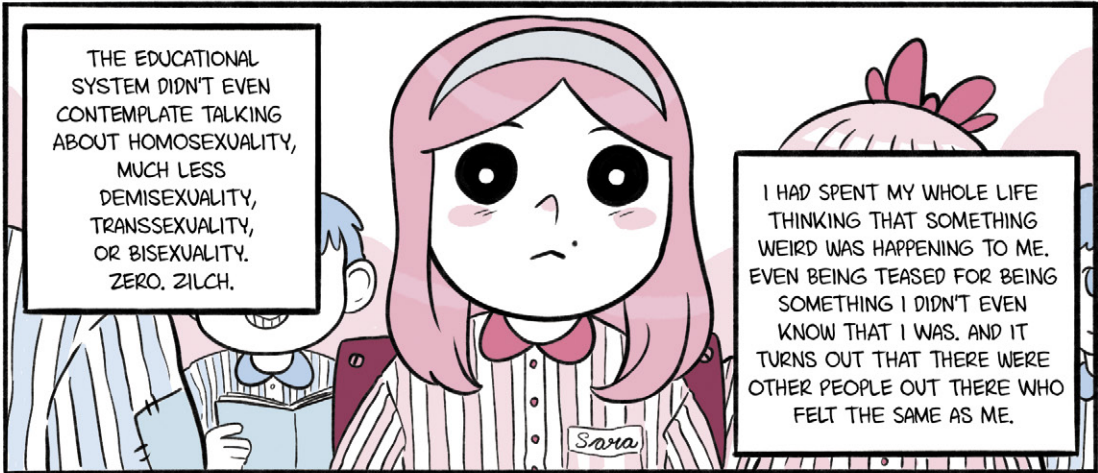
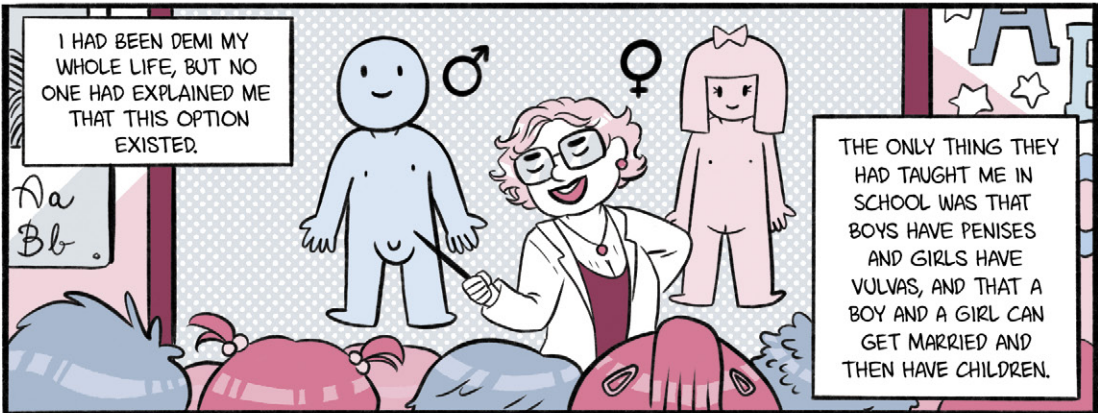
Demisexuals, or "demis," are people incapable of feeling sexual attraction without having previously formed a profound emotional link with someone. In general, demisexuals do not feel attraction to any gender in particular and can be attracted to any human being.

SHIT!
IT'S ME!

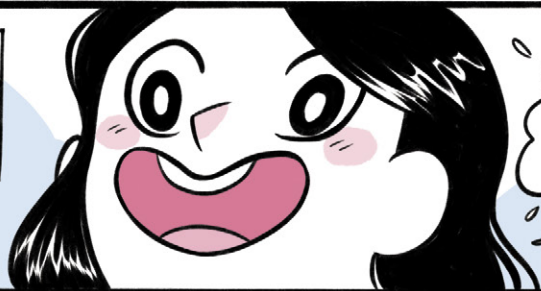
THAT ARTICLE HAD SO EXACTLY DESCRIBED HOW I EXPERIENCED MY SEXUALITY THAT I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO RID MYSELF OF THE LABEL OF HETEROSEXUAL.



ACCEPTING THE TERM "DEMISEXUAL" MADE ME BEGIN TO IDENTIFY WITH SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM HETEROSEXUALITY, OUTSIDE OF THE NORM AND WHAT I HAD BEEN TOLD MY WHOLE LIFE WAS CORRECT. "BOYS GO WITH GIRLS. PERIOD."



WHEN I TOLD DIANA ABOUT DEMISEXUALITY, SHE WAS VERY GLAD, ALTHOUGH SHE TRIED NOT TO SHOW IT. (IT SHOWED.)



REALLY?!

THINGS GOT INTENSE.

SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU'VE BEEN ATTRACTED TO WOMEN?

WELL, I'M NOT SURE YET, BUT I THINK SO.

BUT YOU THINK YOU COULD.

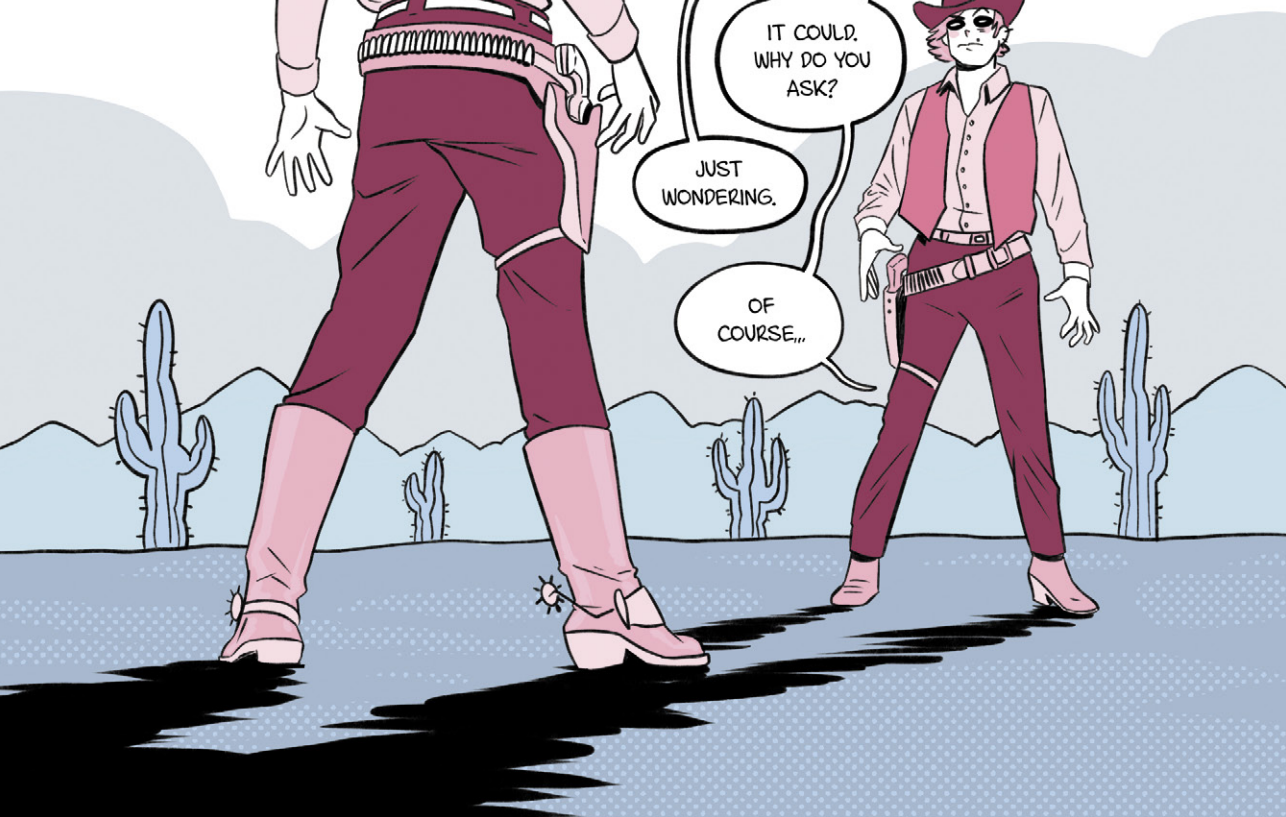
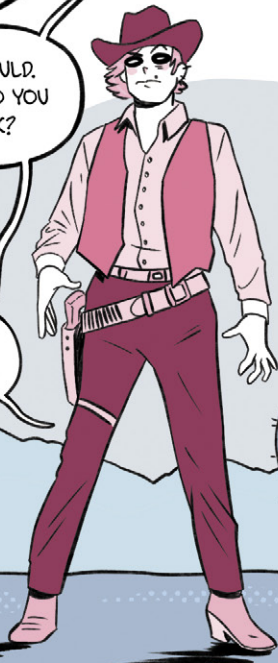
I'D HAVE TO SEE.

ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, IF THERE'S AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION, IT COULD HAPPEN, COULDN'T IT?

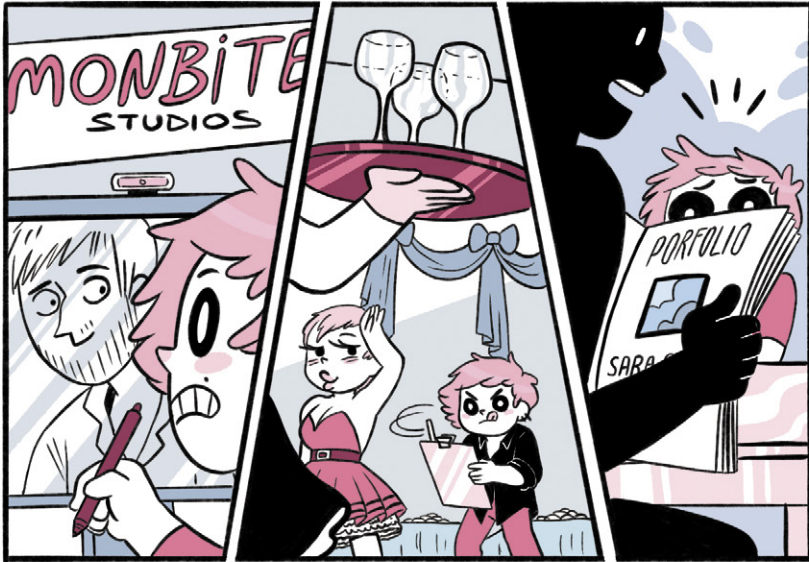
IT COULD. WHY DO YOU ASK?

JUST WONDERING.

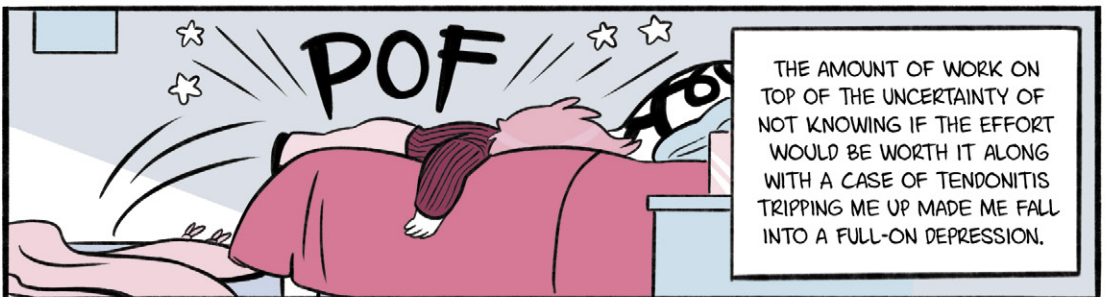
OF COURSE..



I HAD JUST FINISHED MY STUDIES AND I WAS UNDER ENORMOUS PRESSURE TO FIND A JOB OF MY OWN. IF I COULDN'T SUPPORT MYSELF, I WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE THE CITY WHERE I HAD MY LIFE, MY FRIENDS, AND MY POSSIBLE FUTURE CAREER TO GO BACK TO MY PARENT'S HOUSE IN A TOWN 300 KILOMETERS AWAY.



I WORKED VERY HARD SO THAT WOULDN'T HAPPEN. DURING MY FINAL SEMESTER, I WORKED AS A STORYBOARDER, IN ANIMATION, ADVERTISING, AND DESIGN, AS A CARICATURIST, WHILE I TRIED TO GET MY DOSSIERS READY TO SEND TO PUBLISHERS AND TURN IN MY ASSIGNMENTS FOR CLASS.



CLASSES AND THE PRECARIOUS GIGS WERE OVER, I HAD MANAGED TO SET ASIDE A BIT OF EXTRA MONEY TO THROW AROUND, I WAS ABLE TO REST, AND EVERYTHING STARTED TO GET BETTER.

I FINALLY GOT AN OPPORTUNITY.

Q BUS

IMPORTANT PUBLISHING HOUSE, L.L.C.
WE WOULD BE ABLE TO PUBLISH YOUR FIRST COMIC IF YOU WORK LIKE A DOG

E

BIG AL'S
YOUR ORDER IS ON THE WAY

B

IMPORTANT BUSINESS
YOU DON'T FIT INTO OUR PR

PING!

GOING ALL OUT!
LIVING OFF OF MY COMICS!
TO THE MAX!

OH YEAH! QUEEN!
ROCKSTAR! YOU CAN DO IT!

I FOCUSED ON THE OPPORTUNITY 200%.

DIANA HAD SUPPORTED ME THROUGHOUT THAT ENTIRE CATASTROPHIC PERIOD.

AND KEPT ON DOING IT UNCONDITIONALLY.

EVEN THOUGH FOR SOME TIME, THE QUESTION OF HER GENDER HAD BEEN BURNING HER UP FROM THE INSIDE.

IT HAD GONE FROM A SPARK TO A BLAZE IN THOSE TWO YEARS.

I WAS SO NERVOUS AND SO FOCUSED ON FINISHING THE DOSIER FOR MY PROJECT THAT I WAS CLUELESS ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT WAS HAPPENING AROUND ME.

AND SO AS TO NOT PUT MORE PRESSURE ON ME, DIANA SWALLOWED HER FEELINGS UNTIL I TURNED THE PROPOSAL OVER TO THE PUBLISHER.

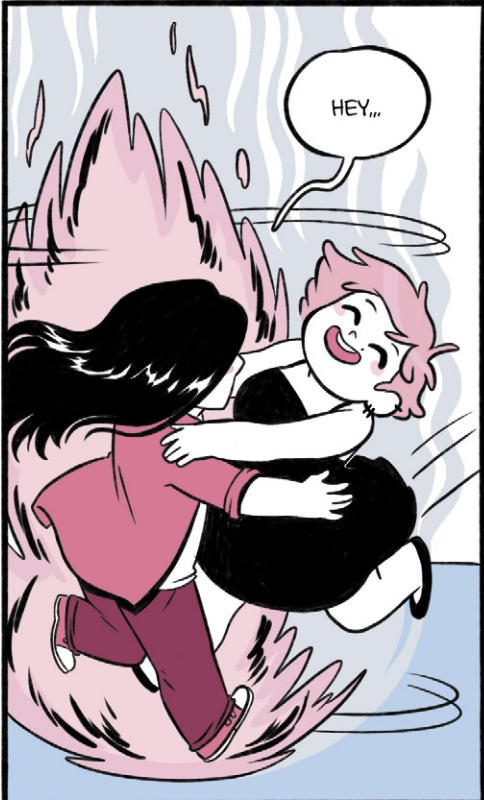
YIPEEEEEE,
I FINISHED!



WITHIN A
WEEK THEY'LL
TELL ME IF
THEY'RE PICKING
ME UP!



OH, OH,
OH...



HEY...



NOW THAT
EVERYTHING'S
CALMER AGAIN,
I'D LIKE TO TELL
YOU SOMETHING...



MY SPIDEY
SENSES ARE
TINGLING.



ZEN SARA HAS APPEARED, A STATE OF ENLIGHTENMENT INTO WHICH I ENTER WHEN I NEED TO CONTROL A VERY FUCKED-UP SITUATION AT ALL COSTS.

SHE IS CAPABLE OF REASONING AND MINIMIZING ANYTHING WITH THE SERENITY OF ONE HUNDRED DALAI LAMAS.

IT MUST BE SAID, SHE COULD SHOW HERSELF MORE FREQUENTLY.

OMMM
OMMM
OMMM

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT SOMETHING LIKE THIS WOULD DISAPPEAR OVERNIGHT, TO BE HONEST.

EVEN THOUGH, IF I'M HONEST, I HAD MY HOPES...

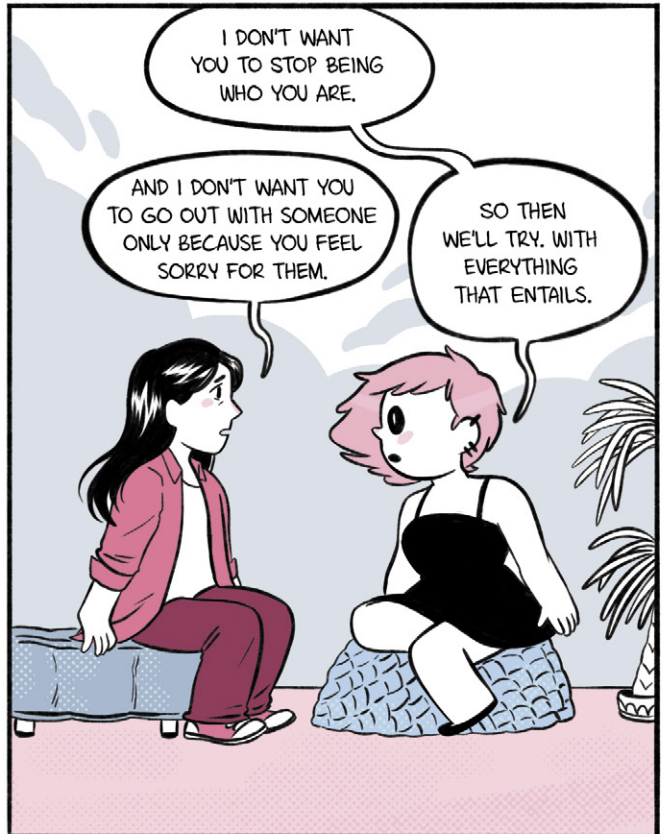
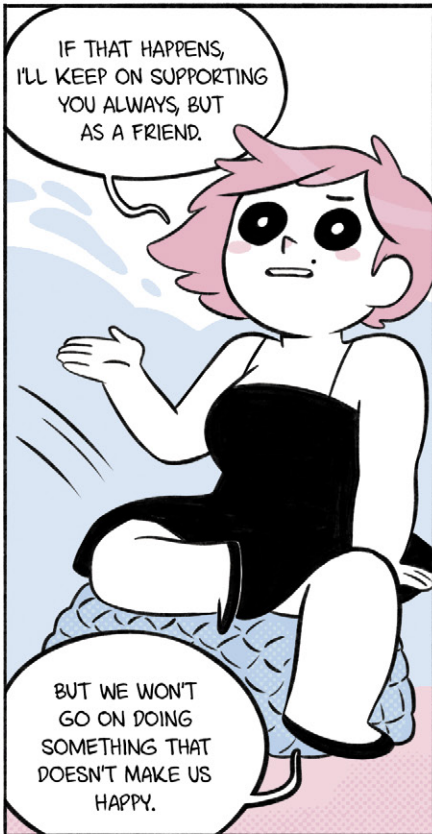
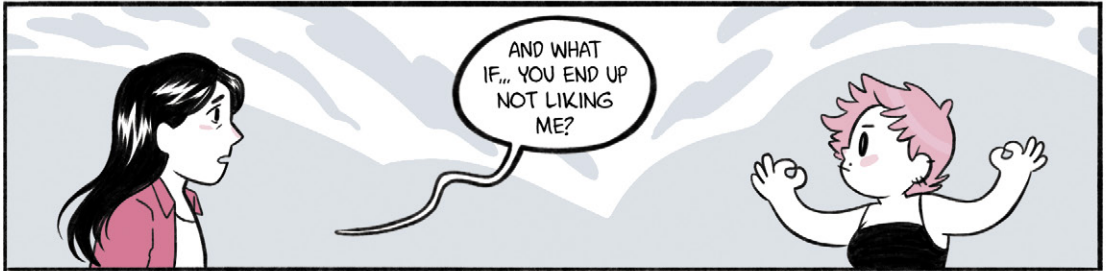
OOF... WELL, THAT SOUNDED HORRIBLE.

LET ME EXPLAIN.

IF THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, YOU CAN'T GO ON REJECTING IT.

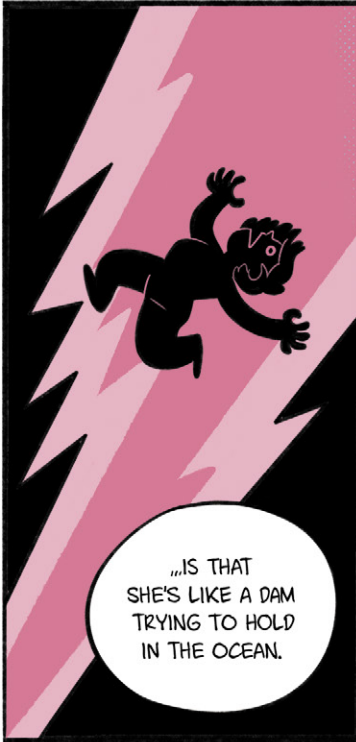
IT'S GOING TO BE DIFFICULT AND MESSY, AND EVERYTHING WOULD BE SIMPLER ANOTHER WAY, YES...

BUT YOU HAVE TO LIVE YOUR TRUTH, AND THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY RELATIONSHIP.





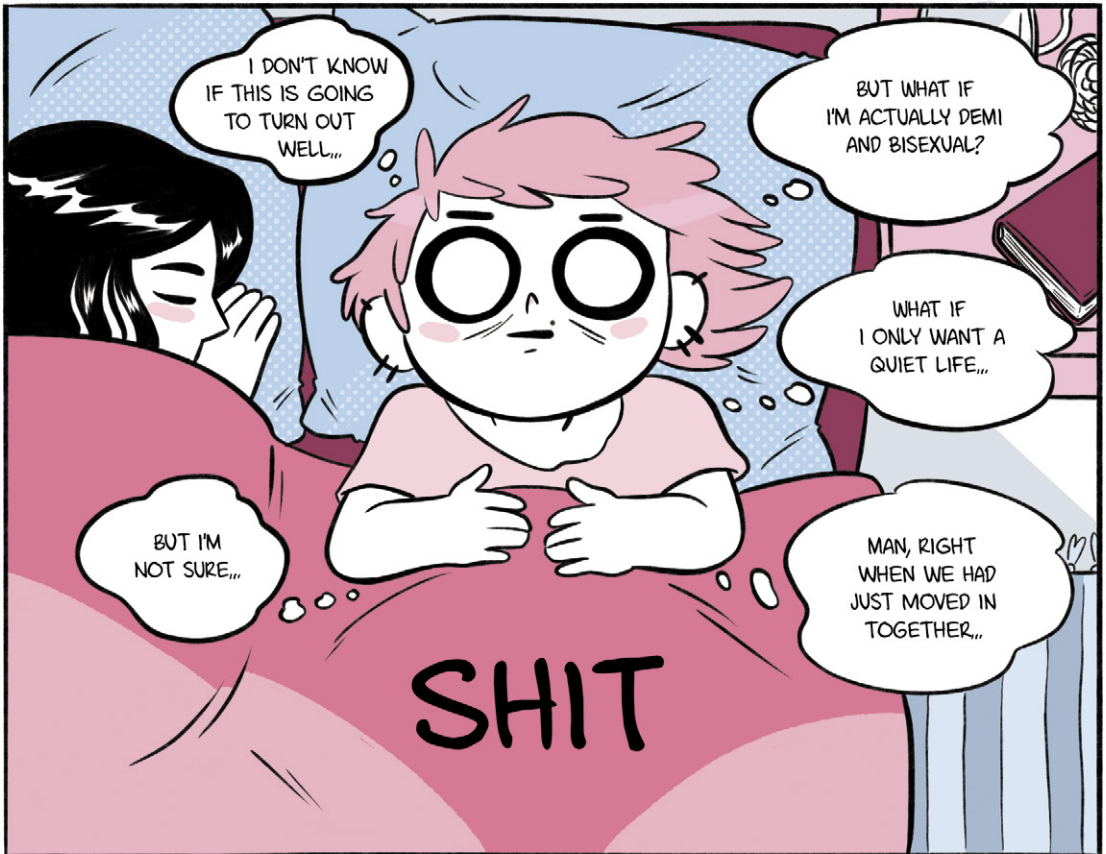
THE BAD THING ABOUT ZEN SARA...



...IS THAT SHE'S LIKE A DAM TRYING TO HOLD IN THE OCEAN.



SOONER OR LATER, IT'S GOING TO END UP EXPLODING.



I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS GOING TO TURN OUT WELL...

BUT I'M NOT SURE...

BUT WHAT IF I'M ACTUALLY DEMI AND BISEXUAL?

WHAT IF I ONLY WANT A QUIET LIFE...


MAN, RIGHT WHEN WE HAD JUST MOVED IN TOGETHER...

SHIT

IT ALL CAME BACK: THE ANXIETY, THE NERVES, AND ABOVE ALL, A GREAT SADNESS WHOSE SOURCE I COULDN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON. I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I TEND TO THINK EVERYTHING IS GOING TO TURN OUT POORLY FOR ME, SO I WENT BACK TO THINKING THAT WE'D END UP BREAKING UP.

MEANWHILE, I TRIED TO PRETEND EVERYTHING WAS NORMAL.


THIS IS FINE.



WHAT IF OUR FAMILIES OR FRIENDS TAKE IT POORLY? AND REJECT US AND WE END UP ALL ALONE?



DAMN IT! I DON'T WANT PEOPLE IN MY LIFE WHO ARE CAPABLE OF TURNING THEIR BACKS ON SOMEONE FOR BEING THEMSELVES EITHER.



I THOUGHT IT OVER FOR DAYS, ANALYZING PROS AND CONS.

WHAT IF OUR FRIENDS ARE TRANSPHOBIC?

WHAT IF THEY KICK HER OUT?

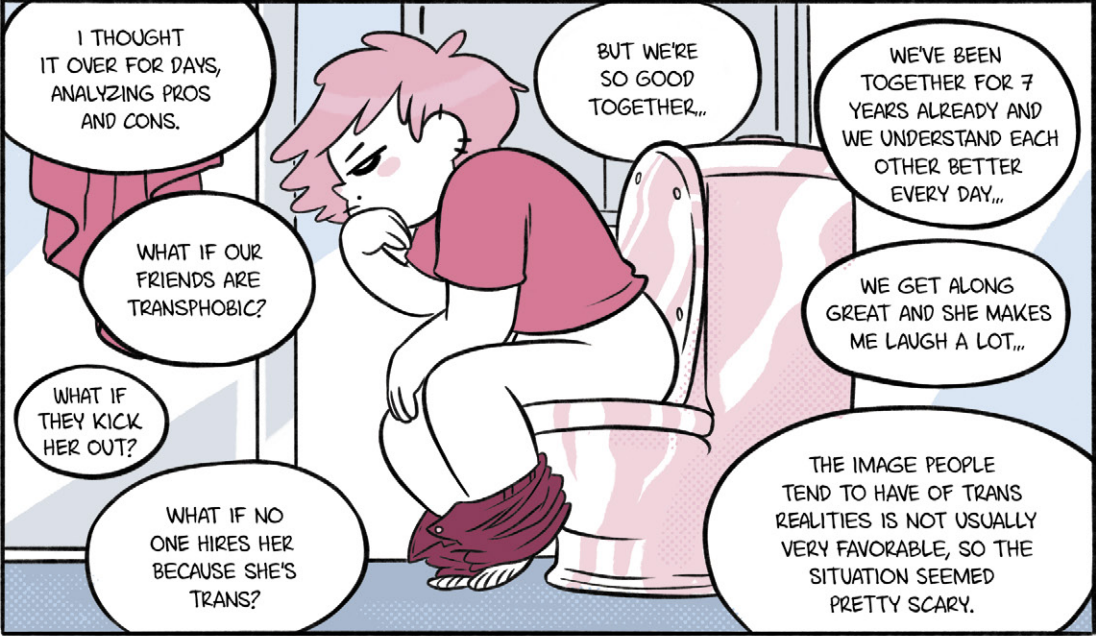
WHAT IF NO ONE HIRES HER BECAUSE SHE'S TRANS?

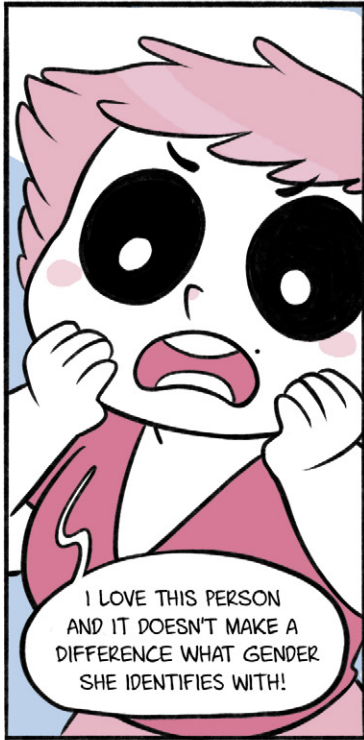
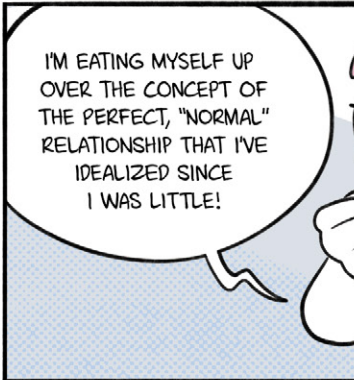
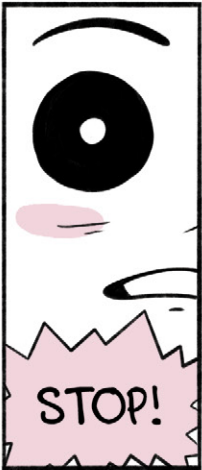
BUT WE'RE SO GOOD TOGETHER...

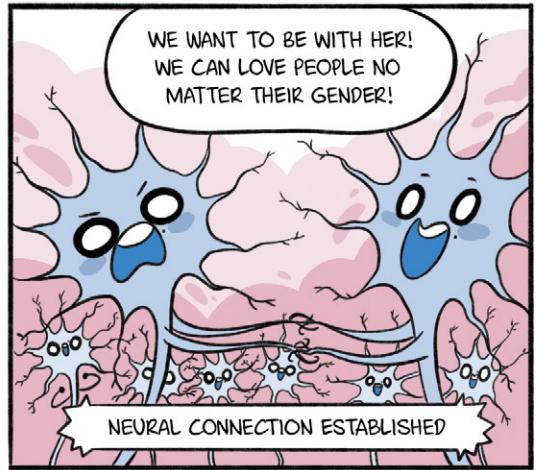
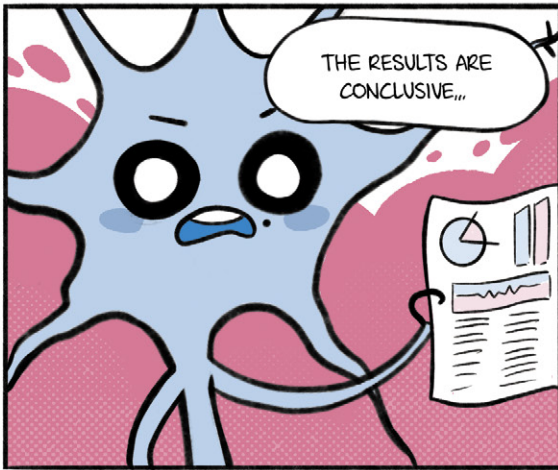
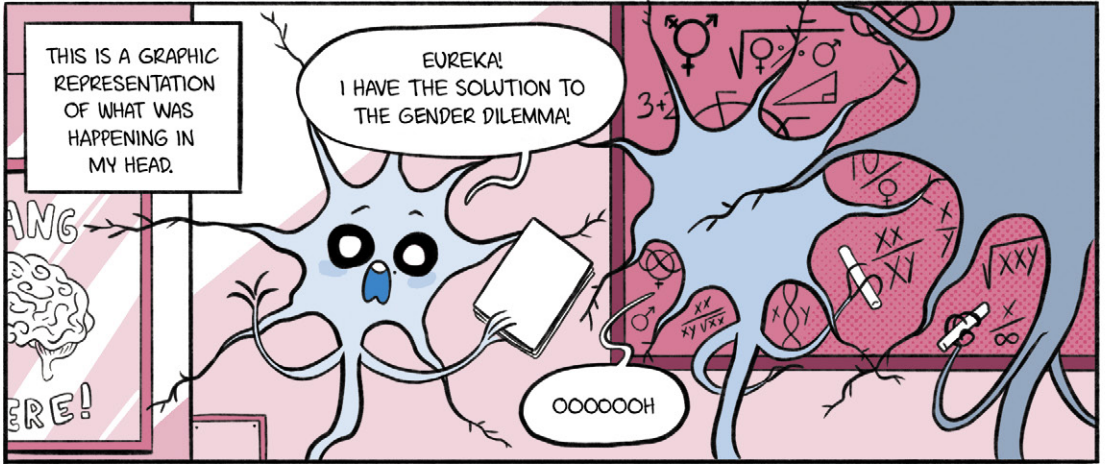
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR 7 YEARS ALREADY AND WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER EVERY DAY...

WE GET ALONG GREAT AND SHE MAKES ME LAUGH A LOT...

THE IMAGE PEOPLE TEND TO HAVE OF TRANS REALITIES IS NOT USUALLY VERY FAVORABLE, SO THE SITUATION SEEMED PRETTY SCARY.

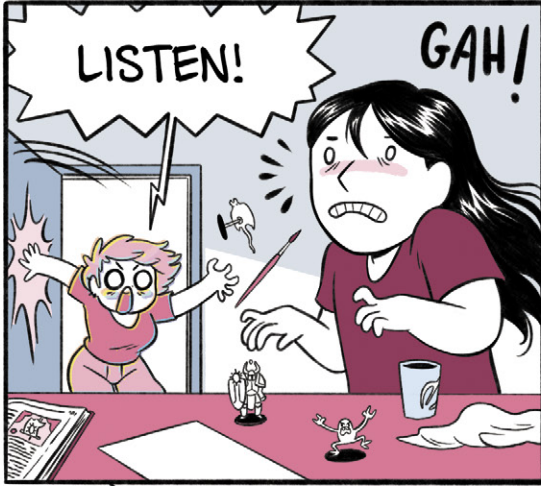






I'MMMMM BIIIIIIII



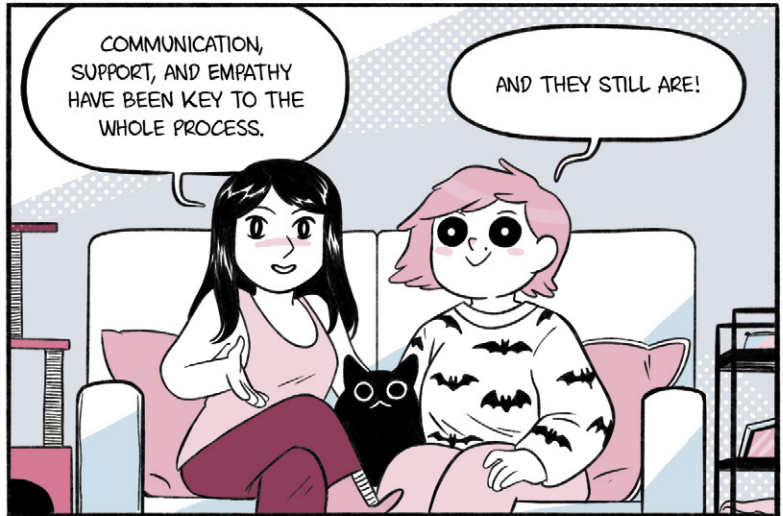


SHE HAS ACCEPTED
HER SEXUAL
ORIENTATION ONCE
AND FOR ALL.





WE'RE NOT
BREAKING
UP!



COMMUNICATION,
SUPPORT, AND EMPATHY
HAVE BEEN KEY TO THE
WHOLE PROCESS.

AND THEY STILL ARE!



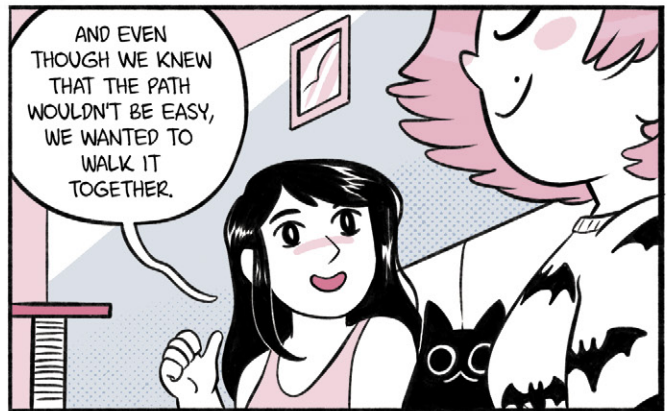
THAT'S NOT
TO SAY THAT
WE DON'T
ARGUE
SOMETIMES...

THERE'S NO
ROOM IN THIS
HOUSE FOR ANY
MORE WARHAMMER!
STOP BUYING IT!

MAYBE IT
DOESN'T FIT
BECAUSE OF
YOUR PILES
OF COMICS!



THE THING IS THAT NOTHING
HAS CHANGED BETWEEN US!
IF ANYTHING, WE'RE MORE SINCERE
AND UNDERSTANDING WITH EACH
OTHER. WE FIGURED OUT
OUR SITUATION!



AND EVEN
THOUGH WE KNEW
THAT THE PATH
WOULDN'T BE EASY,
WE WANTED TO
WALK IT
TOGETHER.



THERE WAS
ONLY ONE
THING LEFT...

COME OUT OF THE CLOSET
TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.



I'M
SCAREDDDD!

NOT TO WORRY,
I'LL WAIT FOR
YOU.